

Apples, Bones & Conkers

The ABC's of the Modern Nation of Israel

Characters:

Rabbi Alterman

Jewish Students

Ezra (student)

Chaim Weizmann (older)

Chaim Weizmann (younger)

Mother Weizmann

Father Weizmann

Presider (at World Zionist Congress)

Zionist Congress attendees

Theodore Herzl

Lord Balfour

Waiter 1

Mikael Yeva (Waiter 2)

Café Patrons

Ottoman Soldier 1

Ottoman Soldier 2

Ottoman Soldier 3

Mother Aaronsohn

Aaron Aaronsohn

Sarah Aaronsohn

Watson (Butler)

Rivkah Aaronsohn

Alex Aaronsohn

General Allenby

British Officer Watson

British Officer Davies

British Private Murch

Arab Washing Woman

Mayor Hussein al-Husayni

Arab Man 1

Arab Man 2

Jewish Students

Weizmann Children

Jerusalem Citizens

Scene 1:

Jewish music playing, boys enter from various doors and gather into a line before sitting down. (Classroom setting – orthodox Jewish boys sitting at desks. RABBI enters stage left)

RABBI ALTERMAN: Shalom. Boker tov.

STUDENTS: *(in unison)* Shalom. Boker tov Rabbi Alterman.

RABBI: We will begin this morning with a reading from the Torah. Let us be attentive to the words of this law. Ezra Freedman, please come forward to read today's portion.

(Ezra goes to front of class, takes scroll out of the box, opens, begins reading)

EZRA: *(reading passage)*

(Ezra puts scroll back in box. Rabbi begins handing out papers).

RABBI: *(To Ezra)* Toda Ezra. Very good. *(To the rest)* I have marked your mathematics papers from yesterday. I would like them corrected and returned to me by tomorrow. *(Passing out papers)* Some of you did very well, some of you need a little work, and *(hitting student over the head with paper)* some of you should pay more attention to your lesson.

(Rabbi approaches blackboard and begins writing, ad lib introducing the lesson).

(Boys whispering to each other, one of the boys passing a note to another, etc... Then all freeze)

(CHAIM WEIZMANN enters door stage right. While he is speaking he is "correcting" all the naughtiness among the boys (and commenting casually on their behavior).)

CHAIM WEIZMANN: I have always thought that to be a Zionist, it is not necessary to be mad...but it helps. For over 2000 years, we Jews have been downtrodden, and scattered in all corners of the world and have had no place to pitch our tent. We have been persecuted everywhere, and a burden on all people; and yet my prayer from a young age as a schoolboy, was "next year in Jerusalem." In our remote Russian village, we had little contact with the outside world. We had no need of it. However, whispers reached us that more and more of our Jewish brethren were risking their lives to return to Zion – to the land of our forefathers – to Eretz Israel. ('IS-RYE-EL')

(CHAIM exits door stage left)

(Students unfreeze. RABBI finishes writing, turns around)

RABBI: Boys, before we continue, Chaim has written something that he would like to share, based on the reading from the Torah this morning.

YOUNG CHAIM: *(reading this, slow and deliberate, looking confident)* Jerusalem – our native land. Though scattered and persecuted in every land, let us carry our banner to Zion. Let us return to our first mother, on whose knees we were born. For why should we expect compassion from the kings of Europe, that they should, in their pity for us, give us a resting place? In vain, all have decided that the Jew is doomed to death. Let us return to Zion! Jews, to Zion, let us go!

RABBI: *(reflectively, rhetorically)* And how do you propose that such an aliyah could occur, young Chaim? *(pauses briefly but does not allow him to respond)* That will be all for today boys, you are dismissed.

(boys gather up belongings, begin to leave. Rabbi motions to Young Chaim quietly, putting arm over his shoulder)

RABBI: Chaim, I will walk you home. I need to speak to your father.

Scene 2:

MUSIC

(STAGE CHANGE – desks removed, kitchen set up (table, wash pans, etc.))

(RABBI and students exit stage right down stairs. RABBI and YOUNG CHAIM walk past front of stage.)

(MOTHER WEIZMANN busy feeding and caring for numerous children. From stage left, YOUNG CHAIM walks in with RABBI. YOUNG CHAIM approaches mother and greets/hugs her.)

YOUNG CHAIM: *(affectionately)* Shalom Ima.

MOTHER WEIZMANN: My son! *(passes child to daughter; walking towards CHAIM)* So good to see you. I trust you were diligent in your studies today? *(seeing the RABBI)* Oh Chaim – have you been reading during your lessons again?

YOUNG CHAIM: No Ima!

RABBI: *(interrupts, coming to his defense)* No, Mrs. Weizmann, not at all. He's a good boy. Very good student. In fact, today he wrote a letter that he has shared with the class about the future of our people. I am here to speak to his father. Is he available?

MOTHER WEIZMANN: No, not yet. He will be here shortly. Please join us for our evening meal. Children, come to the table.

(all sit down at table. RABBI says prayer for meal, family begins eating while making small talk. FATHER enters stage left, walks hunched over to wash basin and washes/dries hands & face. Then RABBI stands up and approaches him.)

RABBI: Shalom to you.

FATHER: And also to you. *(motions to Rabbi to come away from the group to front of stage right)*

RABBI: I am here about your boy Chaim. You and I both know that he exhibits intelligence and wisdom beyond his years, and he could benefit in many ways if he moves to a bigger city. I have found a place for Chaim at a Russian school in Pinsk. Not only will he continue his religious studies, but I know he has a natural bent towards science, and there is a teacher there who can stimulate his interest in chemistry.

FATHER: *(somberly)* I knew this time would come. At 11 he has outgrown this garbage heap that is our settlement. If he is to do any good for our people, he must be able to live and function among non-Jews. Pinsk?

(FATHER and RABBI continue talking quietly, looking over paper etc. Rest of family all leave but CHAIM exit stage left. He remains at a table working.)

Scene 3:

(OLDER CHAIM enters stage right through door,)

CHAIM: *(gesturing to young Chaim at table)* In the first 11 years of my life I grew up under the influence of my learned father. He had steeped us in the tradition of Judaism, and the belief that the Jews must return to the land of Israel to fulfill God's promise. *(FATHER AND RABBI LEAVE STAGE RIGHT)* For the next 15 years I would apply myself to my studies. I was immediately recognized as an extraordinarily promising student in chemistry. *(YOUNG CHAIM exits stage left)* Russia, Berlin, Switzerland – all doors were opened to me – and by the age of 26 my life's purpose was crystallized. Chemistry was my livelihood, but Zionism was my love. *(OLDER CHAIM FREEZES WITH BOOK IN HAND)*

(MUSIC ON, STAGE CHANGE – Zionist Congress – 4 chairs with covers, chair for Herzl, podium)

(PRESIDER, etc. enter and get into place on stage)

(OLDER CHAIM UNFREEZES ONCE DELEGATES SEATED)

My studies abroad had taught me that while God had promised that our people would return to our land, there was yet no formal Zionist organization. And so it was with great anticipation that I responded to the call from Theodore Herzl, to attend the World Zionist Congress.

(CHAIM takes his place in a seat, delegates enter and sit holding programs)

PRESIDER: It is a great honor that I am able to call Theodore Herzl to open this Zionist Congress – the first Jewish parliament in modern history – to discuss the future of the Jews.

(HERZL stands up)

HERZL: The purpose of this first Zionist congress is to lay the foundation stone of the house, which is to provide a safe haven for the Jewish people. For thousands of years we have been scattered everywhere. Driven from place to place, city to city, from country to country. All along we have been falsely accused, libeled, murdered. The souls of our weary feet have never found a place to rest. Now is the time to effect a change for our people. It is the responsibility of the Zionists to awaken the Jewish people throughout the world, and a need and desire to create for themselves a legal homeland. And so, today we are founding the Jewish state. You may laugh at me today. Maybe in 5 years, but certainly in 50, everyone will agree. Thank-you.

(attendees all clap politely, then get up and talk amongst themselves while exiting door stage left. HERZL gathers notes at podium, CHAIM approaches him.)

CHAIM: Mr. Herzl. It was a privilege to hear your address this morning. I agree entirely that we must establish a home for the Jewish people in Palestine as soon as possible.

HERZL: Dr. Weizmann. It matters not *where* the homeland is, provided that it is safe. We have the support of Britain to create a Jewish state in Africa. We must act quickly to secure a safe place for our people.

CHAIM: AFRICA?! The Jews *must* return to the ancient land of *Israel*. There can be no Zionism without *Zion* at the center. You talk of Jews returning to Palestine *legally*. We cannot wait for this day to happen. The Ottoman empire is in favor of Jews returning to farm the land, and we must encourage the 10s of 1000s of Jews to return to their roots.

HERZL: Dr. Weizmann. You have a zeal in your youth that is commendable, I see you one day becoming a leader of our people. However, you are misled, you have let your sentimental notions to carry you down a path that will not be useful for our people and so until you can change your mind and walk down the same road with me. Good day!

(HERZL gives a curt nod, snaps his briefcase shut and walks away, exits stage left out door. CHAIM faces audience, narrating again)

Scene 4:

CHAIM: It was only a short while later that I heard of the sudden death of this great man – Theodore Herzl – but with his death the Jewish people lost all interest in pursuing a Jewish homeland in Africa. And good riddance to that! However, not *everyone* abandoned the Africa offer. *(pausing again)* Before long I took up a position in England that allowed me to further my goals for the Zionist movement.

(stagehands set up chemistry desk as if “moving in”, Chaim interacts with them telling them what to do while he inspects his things. WATSON enters stage right through door)

WATSON: *(knocks, bows stiffly)* Announcing Lord Arthur Balfour! *(steps aside)*
(BALFOUR enters behind him with cane)

BALFOUR: *(removing top hat, nodding)* Dr. Weismann, it is a pleasure to finally meet you.

CHAIM: *(shaking hands)* And you, Lord Balfour.

BALFOUR: Your work at the university has brought you much respect and fame. You are a convincing advocate for the Zionist cause, and your followers are very loyal, both Jews and non-Jews. I myself am a passionate student of the Bible, and have for a number of years been interested in Zionist ideals. We Christians owe the Jews an immeasurable debt. However, please help me understand why you will not accept our offer of Africa for a homeland?

CHAIM: *(pacing)* Mr. Balfour, supposing I were to offer you Paris instead of London, would you take it?

BALFOUR: *(looking up)* But Dr. Weizmann, we *have* London.

CHAIM: *(deliberately, standing still now)* But we had Jerusalem when London was a marsh!

BALFOUR: *(staring intently, walking back and forth)* Are there many Jews that think like you?

CHAIM: I believe I speak the minds of millions of Jews whom you will never see, and cannot speak for themselves.

BALFOUR: *(slowly)* Come again to see me. I am very interested. It is not a dream, it is a great cause.
(BALFOUR exits stage right)

Scene 5:

(CHAIM sits down and reads a book. Music starts, SCENE CHANGE around him. Once scene is set up, before AARONSOHNS come in, he puts down his newspaper and introduces the scene (A café in Jerusalem). SARAH, RIVKAH & MOTHER AARONSOHN arrive and sit at a table, sipping tea and eating lunch. CAFÉ PATRONS also in scene, being served by WAITER. MIKAEL YEVA (a waiter) approaches to serve AARONSOHNS tea. As he does, OTTOMAN SOLDIERS 1&2 enter centre stage.)

OTTOMAN SOLDIER 1: *(to WAITER, gruffly)* Where is Mikael Yeva?

WAITER: *(hesitantly pointing)* That's him right over there.

(OTTOMAN SOLDIERS 1&2 march over to him)

OTTOMAN SOLDIER 1: *(to Mikael)* Mikael Yeva?

MIKAEL: *(very hesitantly)* Yes...?

(OTTOMAN SOLDIERS 1&2 roughly grab him and begin dragging him away. He (ad lib) protests as he's being dragged away, "I was just serving coffee" off centre stage).

(MOTHER & RIVKA visibly shaken by what they've seen. Waiter continues to serve coffee and snacks to all patrons)

SARAH: *(angrily)* It's *appalling!* The way that the Ottoman government is systematically *killing* these people, for no other reason than being born Armenian! If it can happen to them, then the day may come when they begin doing the same thing to the *Jews* for being born *Jewish!*

MOTHER: *(in a loud whisper, looking around)* Hush! Hush, my daughter. Don't speak like that Sarah. We are safer here in Palestine than in all the lands we have been scattered in for thousands of years.

RIVKAH: *(whispering, very shaken)* Mother, you know what people are saying – that they are setting whole trains full of Armenian people on fire! *(short of breath)* That they're taking women and children – and *babies* – and throwing them into the sea to drown!

SARAH: *(pounding the table gently)* I've seen it with my own eyes! The sick man of Europe is desperate to grab any remnants of power that he can. Bullies always prey on those who are too weak to defend themselves.

MOTHER: *(firmly)* We will be alright. Your father is a respected man in our community. Yes, it's true, your brother Alex has not always been on the right side of the law, but your brother Aaron's contributions to farming in Palestine are well respected among the Ottoman authorities.

SARAH: *(in a loud whisper)* Whispers of war reach us every day. They are saying it will be bigger than any other – that it will be a great war – a world war. If there is any hope for our Jewish people to make it safely to the other side of the war, then we have to assist the British army in taking Palestine from the Ottomans.

RIVKAH: *(excitedly)* Then – finally – a homeland can be established for the Jewish people.

(AARONSOHNS collect their bags and leave. Stagehands clear stage, leaving 1 chair.)

Scene 6:

CHAIM: For the last 30 years, over 75,000 Jews from all over the world have been returning to Ottoman-controlled Palestine. All of this is changing now on the eve of WWI. The Ottomans have turned their backs on their traditional allies – the British – and joined in the war against them. *(Jews enters room from various doors while he talks)*

At the same time in Palestine, the tides have turned against the Jews.

(CHAIM exits stage left)

(OTTOMAN SOLDIERS enter from three doors; JEWS get funneled into corner by OTTOMAN SOLDIERS)

SOLDIER 1: *(yelling angrily)* Grab those filthy Jews – don't let them get away! They are spies and traitors to the sultan!

SOLDIER 2: *(in a fury)* We let you into our empire; we gave your families a safe home; and how do you repay us? By putting a knife in our back to help the British cause!

SOLDIER 3: Our empire has lasted for 500 years, *(jabbing Jews with butt of rifle)* and a few pigs like you aren't going to tear us down!

SOLDIER 1: *(Pulling paper from pocket to read instructions)* Aaron Aaronsohn – which one of you is Aaron Aaronsohn? *(Removes A.A. from the group, pushes him into a chair forcefully, but he sits up determinedly. Rest of group is held in back corner by SOLDIER 3).*

AARON: I demand to know for what cause I am being detained!

SOLDIER 2: You're a filthy Jew – that's reason enough. However, lucky for you, you have a reputation. *(dryly sarcastic)* "Aaron Aaronsohn – world famous botanist." For 10 years you have been developing the farming potential of Palestine. Well, we are at war, and as you are well aware, for the last 6 months a plague of locusts has stripped this area of almost all vegetation. *(he goes to guard others with SOLDIER 3)*

SOLDIER 1: We have orders – we are running out of food to feed our soldiers. We need you to fight the locust invasion. You'll be given permission to move around the country, money and supplies.

AARON: Well, I won't be able to work alone. My brother and 2 sisters *(pointing to them)* have assisted me for the last 10 years. They will also have to be given the same permissions.

SOLDIER 1: *(forcefully)* Permission granted. Get to work.
(SOLDIER 2 pushes Aaronsohns gruffly toward AARON)

(SOLDIERS exit stage left)
(AARON gathers with family)

SARAH: *(very concerned)* Oh Aaron. How can you agree to help them feed their armies? You've seen how they treat our people. If we have any future in Eretz Israel, we must be totally freed from Ottoman rule.

AARON: *(quietly)* The Eternal God of Israel will not lie. Our God has promised that our people will return to this land. This is our chance to help. This work will allow us to collect information about the Ottoman forces and feed it back to the British. You see where I'm going with this?

SARAH: Of course brother – we are all with you. The God of Israel will not lie!
(they huddle, ad lib sending them out on spy missions in different directions)

(CHAIM enters stage left)

CHAIM: And thus began the largest pro-British spy network within the Ottoman empire. Over 40 spies were part of what became known as the NILI spy ring – Netzakh Yisrael Lo Yeshaker – “The Eternal God of Israel will not lie.” *(WATSON brings him lab coat; he puts it on. STAGE CHANGE – lab scene)*

Scene 7:

CHAIM: But while the famine took its toll on the Ottoman forces, things were looking equally dire among the British forces. The long war had depleted Britain’s stockpile of gunpowder, but a famous chemist (that’s me!) made a discovery that changed the course of the war and the fate of the Jewish people.

MUSIC

(mumbling to himself about his lab work, hazelnuts, etc. Varying success with creating explosions. Final one very successful.)

CHAIM: *(Looks up at audience very surprised and pleased)* I think I should bring this to the attention of the war office. Watson!! *(WATSON enters)* Watson – send news of this to the war office at once!

WATSON: Yes, Dr. I will do so right away. *(exits)*

(WATSON leaves. Music on. Long pause. CHAIM looking earnestly...nothing. BALFOUR eventually enters stage left)

BALFOUR: *(removes hat)* Mr. Weizmann. I have just received word of the recent discovery you’ve made.

CHAIM: Just! I sent that news 2 years ago!

BALFOUR: *(ignoring his comment, looking over the lab equipment)*. If I understand you correctly, you believe that this process could produce vast quantities of explosives? From *horse chestnuts*?!

CHAIM: Most certainly.

BALFOUR: *(looking in amazement, grabbing him by the shoulders excitedly)* Mr. Weizmann...you have just become the most indispensable man in the country. You’ll be knighted for this, for sure! You name the honor, and it will be yours!

CHAIM: As honored as I am, it is not for myself that I ask anything. Be good to my people the Jews. Help them to help themselves to their own homeland. I have received news from my friend Aaron Aaronsohn – that he is having difficulty gaining the trust of the British in the Middle East. His family risks their lives and the lives of every person in their town, to gain intel to help the British win this war. The NILI spy network needs to be trusted! They are on our side.

BALFOUR: You have my word. You may let the Aaronsohn’s know. *(puts hat back on)*

CHAIM: Thank-you. *(shake hands)*

MUSIC

(Both exit opposite sides of stage).

STAGE CLEARED

Scene 8:

SARAH, standing in darkness as if on the shore. Sounds of lapping water. She is signaling with her lamp; waiting; checking pocketwatch; waiting...)

SARAH: (*impatiently*) He was supposed to be here 30 minutes ago. Where is he?
(*Goes to signal again. Hears splashing*)

SARAH: (*Peering out into darkness, in disbelief*) I don't believe this. (*puts her lamp down, takes coat off*).
Well, here we go! (*steps down*)
(*Lights go black*)

(AARON, RIVKA, ALEX sitting around table with candle burning, whispering quietly. SARAH enters, sopping wet, fully clothed.)

SARAH: The information has been delivered to the British. General Allenby should have it within a few days.

AARON: Sarah, why are you soaking wet? What took you so long?

SARAH: (*ringing out her hair*) You'll never believe what happened. The British spy was too afraid to swim to shore in the cold water, so they gave him a bottle of rum to calm his nerves. He was completely drunk! He was swimming in circles when I found him! It's a good thing I found him before the Ottomans - they have submarines all over the Mediterranean shores! I've put him in a safe house overnight. Aaron, we won't be able to rely on swimmers from the boats anymore. Next time you're in Egypt you'll need to bring homing pigeons back with you. We can use those.

ALEX: Pigeons?! And how do you think he's going to get those past the Ottoman soldiers, brilliant sister of ours?

RIVKAH: He'll be fine - he'll just make it up on the fly.

ALEX: Yah I guess. He'll just wing it!

(*whole family laughs. AARON, becoming serious...*)

AARON: Sarah, Dr. Weizmann has requested that I travel to the United States to fundraise money for the Zionist cause. I won't be here to protect you if anything was to happen. I urge you to come with me to stay with the British while I am gone.

SARAH: (*suddenly remembering, pulling out a bag of money from her dress*). I can't. This money has been sent to us by American Jews to buy food for the Jews in Palestine. Aaron, I must continue my work here with NILI. With you gone, somebody has to continue to pass messages along.

AARON: Alright my sister. But do be careful. (*hugs Sarah*)

(AARON exits stage right. Family freezes while CHAIM enters stage left.)

CHAIM: The new method of communication through carrier pigeons worked well for a few months and was instrumental in providing intel to British forces in the Middle East, and swinging the war in favor of

the British. But eventually, one of her carrier pigeons was intercepted by the Ottomans, who quickly sent soldiers to surround the house.

(CHAIM exits stage right)

SARAH: I just hope that our efforts in NILI will bring about a national home for the Jews in Eretz Israel.

ALEX: *(jumping up)* What's that noise?

(RIVKAH Peering around the corner by the steps; screams and faints)

(OTTOMAN SOLDIERS 1, 2 storm the house; grab ALEX)

ALEX: *(yelling)* Sarah – RUN!

(SARAH turns toward stage left door. OTTOMAN SOLDIER 3 comes out from stage left door, points gun at SARAH, who falls to her knees)

SOLDIER 3: Who is your commander? Who are you working for?

SARAH: *(spits)* You'll never get anything out of me, you grandson of the serpent.

SOLDIER 3: *(gruffly)* Take them away, and show no mercy to this one.

MUSIC

(SOLDIERS lead ALEX, and SARAH away, SARAH getting dragged by her hair. Rivkah being carried over Soldier 2's shoulder)

STAGE CHANGE – Weizmann's lab

SCENE 9:

(CHAIM & BALFOUR talking. AARON enters stage right. They greet each other "Shalom")

WATSON: *(Bows)* Announcing Aaron Aaronson.

CHAIM: *(to AARON)* Welcome back from your trip. We were greatly distressed to hear of the loss of your sister Sarah. I trust the rest of your family is safe?

AARON: *(solemnly)* Thank you. The rest of my family is safe, although very shaken. Sarah knew the risks involved. I hope her work was not in vain. One day she will be recognized as the heroine that she was.

BALFOUR: Indeed. The information from NILI has been instrumental in turning the tide of the war in our favor. General Allenby has just sent me word that every move of the enemy was revealed to him, and so he acts with complete confidence. Under these conditions victory is certain. We shall have Jerusalem by Christmas!

AARON: And what does Britain plan to do with Jerusalem once you have it?

CHAIM: I believe, between my war efforts in England and the NILI spy ring efforts in the Middle East, it seems clear that the time has come for the British government to make public its commitment to Zionism.

BALFOUR: As you know, I have been working on a pro-Zionist document that would pledge Britain's strong support for a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. It is my firm conviction that God's hand is in these events. I am here on behalf of the British government, to give it to you, to present to the president of the British Zionist Federation – Lord Rothschild.

AARON: Can you read it to us?

BALFOUR: Certainly. *(opening it, reading it)*

CHAIM: This is an historic moment in Jewish history. A time for rejoicing. A new chapter has been opened for us, full of new difficulties, but not without its great moments.

AARON: Let us pray for General Allenby's success in capturing Jerusalem.

Scene 10:

BRITISH MUSIC PLAYING

(Table on stage. PRIVATE MURCH on left side of table, peeling potatoes. OFFICER WATSON sitting at right side reading a book with feet up.)

(OFFICER DAVIES enters stage right)

OFFICER DAVIES: Evening, Officer Watson. *(jumps up, sits on table, grabs apple and eats.)*

OFFICER WATSON: *(looking up, nodding head in recognition)* Officer Davies.

OFFICER DAVIES: You're *reading a book* the night before we take Jerusalem?

OFFICER WATSON: IF we take Jerusalem; and that's a big "if." But yes, I've got my hands on a copy of the Bible. I figured sitting outside the walls of Jerusalem, I should brush up on my history of what's happened here.

OFFICER DAVIES: *(with an air of doubt)* Yah – the Bible talks about this desert flowing with milk and honey, but I ain't seen a drop of honey since we got here, and in our battery there's 15 men to a can of milk!

OFFICER WATSON: But still you can't argue with the fact that this is the most famous city in the world!

(GENERAL ALLENBY walks in stage right with book in hand. All 3 soldiers jump to attention.)

OFFICER DAVIES: General Allenby – an honor to have you among us, sir. Is there any news of the Ottomans surrendering Jerusalem?

GENERAL ALLENBY: Don't get your hopes up men. The Ottomans are more likely to destroy the city than to surrender it; although there are rumors that their German allies are trying to persuade them to hand over the city peacefully. We shall see what tomorrow will bring. Good night men.
(as he exits stage left...)

OFFICER WATSON: *(to ALLENBY)* Sir, you got a new book there? Is it a good read?

GENERAL ALLENBY: Oh this is an excellent read – “Historical Geography of the Holy Land.” Prime Minister Lloyd George gave it to me before I left England. This book, along with the NILI spy ring, and our Bibles have been instrumental in the success we have had in this middle-east campaign. You best get some rest now soldiers.

(exits)

OFFICER DAVIES: Well men, best to follow orders. I’ll see you in the morning. *(he exits stage right)* Murch- if you burn the potatoes again, I’ll have you clean the entire camp with your toothbrush. Good night.

OFFICER WATSON: *(getting up to leave; to PRIVATE MURCH)* Murch, I’ll be up early tomorrow, and I’d fancy eggs for breakfast. Freshly laid, don’t let it touch the ground. Good night then. *(exits stage right)*

(PRIVATE MURCH starts cleaning up)

PRIVATE MURCH: *(speaking to himself)* Heggs. *(sarcastically)* “I’d like Heggs for breakfast.” Where does he think I’m gonna find Heggs around here? *(huffs)* I’ll have to be up before the sun to find a chicken! *(Exits stage right. Lights out.)*

ARAB MUSIC – SCENE CHANGE

(WASHING WOMAN stage left doing laundry. HUSSEINI enters stage left, followed by 2 ARAB SOLDIERS.)

ARAB SOLDIER 1: Mayor Hussein – why again are we up so early? It’s not even sunrise yet!

ARAB SOLDIER 2: So I don’t think it’s wise for you to be up this early. You’re likely to get pneumonia.

HUSSEINI: *(in high pitched voice)* Nonsense. I have my orders – I must surrender the city of Jerusalem to a British soldier. We need a white flag – I don’t want to get shot when I go out of the gates of the city! Somebody – get me a white flag!

(ARAB SOLDIERS look around, don’t find anything).

WASHING WOMAN: *(holds up a blouse she was scrubbing)* I have a white blouse you may use?

HUSSEINI: *(snubbing)* It seems rather inappropriate to surrender the holiest city in the world, with a woman’s blouse.

ARAB SOLDIER 1: Do you have anything else?

(WASHING WOMAN searches through pile of laundry, finds a white sheet; hands it to him)

ARAB SOLDIER 1: Can we borrow your broom as well?

(Ties sheet to broom handle and hands it to ARAB SOLDIER 2, who leads the procession down center aisle)

(Chicken enters stage left, followed by PRIVATE MURCH. MURCH chases chicken, ad libbing as he goes. Meets up with ARAB SOLDIERS at front middle.)

HUSSEINI: You are a British soldier, are you not?

PRIVATE MURCH: I should say so.

HUSSEINI: Where is General Allah-nebi?

PRIVATE MURCH: Hanged if I know, mister. *(still chasing the chicken)*

HUSSEINI: I want to surrender the city. Here are the keys, they are yours!

PRIVATE MURCH: I don't want your city – I just want some heggs for my Hofficer!

(HUSSEINI takes a step back, confused, looks at his soldiers)

OFFICER WATSON: *(calling from off stage before entering)* Murch! Murch! Where are you? *(enters, coming toward him)* Private Murch – where's my breakfast?! *(Seeing Arabs, confused)* Murch – what is going on?

(MURCH steps back, HUSSEINI steps forward)

HUSSEINI: I want to surrender the city. Here are the keys, they are yours!

(OFFICER WATSON, VERY excited, takes the keys in her hands)

OFFICER WATSON: *(turning to MURCH; calmly but firmly)* Go find General Allenby immediately. Jerusalem has fallen.

PRIVATE MURCH: *(as he exits stage right, mumbling to himself)* I finally find a chicken, and now he wants me to find the General! Next he'll send me on a goose chase!

(British military music playing. OFFICER WATSON leads HUSSEINI & ARAB SOLDIERS to stage left. As they do, Jewish EXTRAS, British soldiers, WASHING WOMAN all gather toward the stage)

(ALLENBY marches in, followed by OFFICER DAVIES who joins OFFICER WATSON. Private MURCH follows behind, joins crowd gathered. ALLENBY to front/center stage.)

GENERAL ALLENBY: To the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed, and the people dwelling in its vicinity: The defeat inflicted upon the Turks by the troops under my command has resulted in the occupation of your City by my forces. I therefore here and now proclaim it to be under Martial Law. However, you need not fear that we will treat you as your enemies have; it is my desire that every person should go about his business without fear of interruption. Furthermore, since your City is regarded very highly by three of the great religions of mankind, and its soil has been hallowed ground for the people of those three religions for many centuries, therefore I make known to you that every sacred building and holy spot, of whatsoever form, of the three religions, will be maintained and protected for those to whom they are so sacred.

(British music plays. Crowd whispers excitedly to each other. ALLENBY shakes hands with OFFICER WATSON AND HUSSEINI. All interact with each other as they exit stage right and thru audience.)
(CHAIM enters from back of center aisle)

CHAIM: Although it would be several years later before the nation of Israel was formally established, the Eternal God was already busy at work in world events to bring about the re-establishment of His people in the land He had promised to their fathers. It was not by their own right arm, or their own cunning, but

because as Deut. 7:8-9 says, “Yahweh *loved* them, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto their fathers. Know therefore that Yahweh thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.”